

UNPROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOR

Dr. Noreen Mirza
Dept of Medical Education
College of Medicine
PNU

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session You should be able to:

- Define unprofessional behavior
- Identify various elements of human nature that contribute to unprofessionalism
- Provide examples of unprofessional behaviors
- Plan strategies to deal with unprofessional behaviors.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lecture You should be able to:

- **Define unprofessional behavior**
- Identify various elements of human nature that contribute to unprofessionalism
- Provide examples of unprofessional behaviors
- Plan strategies to deal with unprofessional behaviors.

Scenario 1

A senior doctor

A senior doctor, head of a high profile department, is known to bring in research dollars, to be very hard working and adept at specialized medical procedures. S/he is well known for **shouting** at nurses, **throwing instruments** back at them, and **humiliating** junior medical staff. S/he is often absent from department, Complaints are made to hospital administration from staff members; increased numbers of "critical incidents" and staff resignations are noted.

Scenario 2 **A general practitioner**

A general practitioner is consistently late or **absent** for pre-scheduled sessions. S/he gives no explanation, leaving the partners to fill in and make excuses. When confronted, s/he becomes **abusive** in front of office staff and patients.

Scenario 3

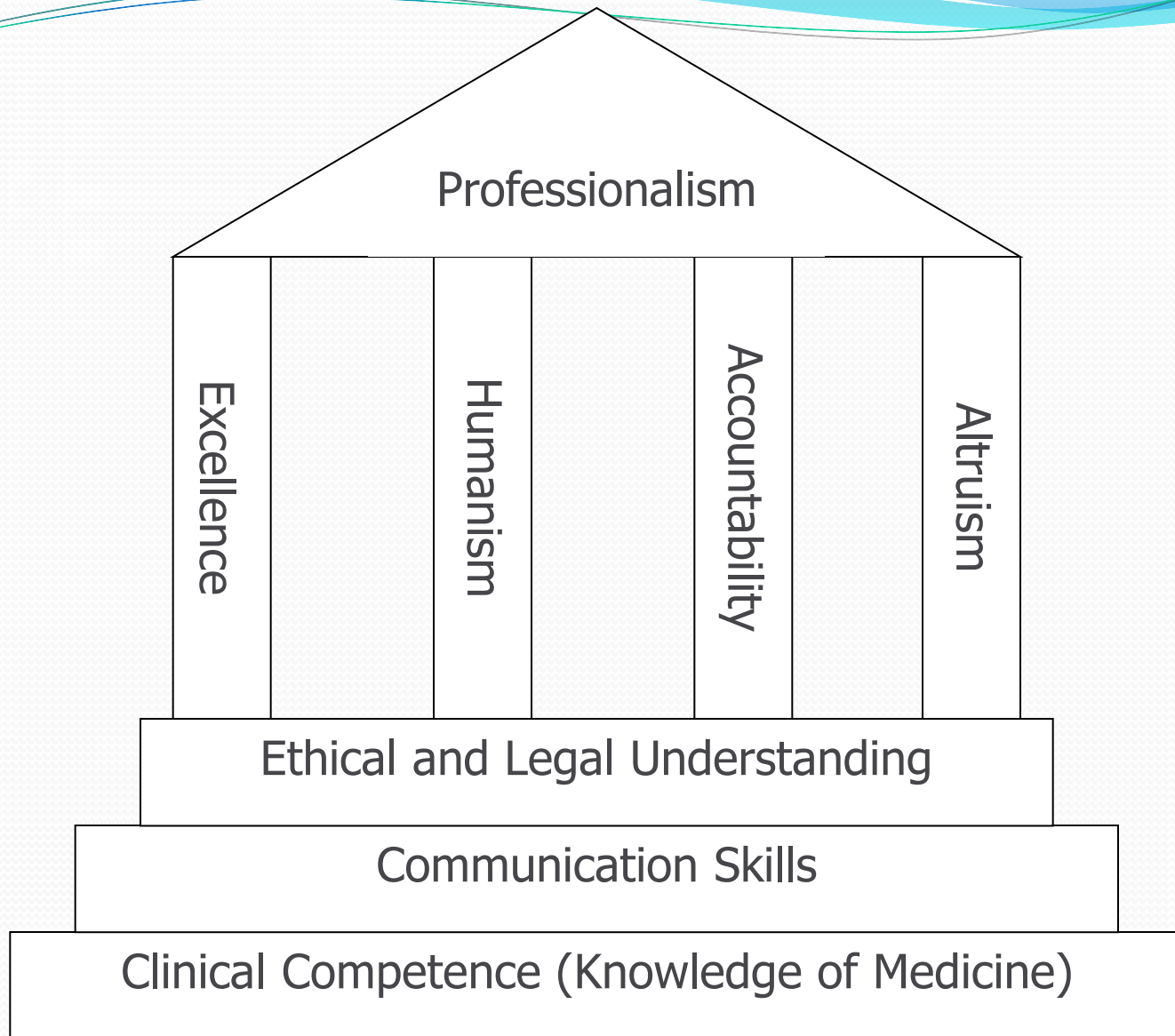
Medical student

A final-year medical student has caused **disruptions** throughout the course by **monopolizing** time in tutorials, **behaving inappropriately** with patients and being unwilling to heed advice. Many patients refuse to be interviewed by her/him and have complained to staff. S/he has not failed any exams, but several tutors and nurses have raised concerns about the student's "attitude" and ability to work as an intern.

Scenario 4

Nurse

A 54 year old male patient is admitted for the fourth time in two months for complaints of severe radicular pain (radiculitis) following several attempts at decompressive back surgery. His pain has been sub-optimally controlled with very high-dose narcotics and other adjuvant pain-management medications. The nursing staff take his vital signs at the start of every shift but otherwise only appear when his medications are due or he rings the call bell. The pain waxes and wanes but is so severe at times that he cries out. The medication orders for breakthrough pain is ineffective. When he tells one nurse this, she responds, sighing, **:you have had your medication and you'll just have to wait three hours for your next dose. I'm going on break, so don't bother to ring the bell"**



Arnold and Stern, 2006

Professional Attributes (A quick review)

- ☐ Honesty/integrity
- ☐ Openness
- ☐ Reliability
- ☐ Responsibility
- ☐ Respect
- ☐ Presence
- ☐ Compassion/empathy
- ☐ Competence
- ☐ Commitment
- ☐ Confidentiality
- ☐ Autonomy
- ☐ Self-improvement
- ☐ Self-awareness / knowledge of limits
- ☐ Communication /collaboration
- ☐ Altruism
- ☐ Morality and ethical conduct
- ☐ Self regulation
- ☐ Teamwork

What is Unprofessionalism?

- ❑ Not following the characteristics of a profession.
- ❑ At variance with or contrary to professional standards or ethics.

Unprofessional behavior

"Unprofessional behavior /conduct" is a broad term
Which results in:

☐ Increased workplace difficulties



☐ Decreased morale in other staff



☐ Decline in patient care



OBJECTIVES

By the end of this session You should be able to:

- Define unprofessional behavior
- **Identify various elements of human nature that contribute to unprofessionalism**
- Provide examples of unprofessional behaviors
- Plan strategies to deal with unprofessional behaviors.

Unprofessional behavior

In general terms, acts that may be characterized as “unprofessional” fall into five categories:

1. Illegal or criminal acts



2. Immoral acts



3. Business related acts



4. Acts that violate acceptable medical practices



5. Plagiarism





1. Illegal or Criminal acts

In addition to the penalties imposed by the legal system for a criminal conviction, a physician may also be disciplined and **lose his medical license** based solely on the fact that he was convicted for a crime or offense.

2. Immoral acts



“Immoral” acts generally fall into the limited category of sexual activity with individuals that may be patients.

Immoral acts (example)

http://www.cbc.ca/news/technology/story/2012/03/21/online-dating-doctor-patient.html

Doctors dating patients online...

File Edit View Favorites Tools Help

EVL_024 - User Logout Medical Professionalism ... Blackboard Learn (2) KKHU E-paper Daily Express (2) Southern Africa - FAIMER ...

Technology & Science Quirks & Quarks Blog Photo Galleries

Doctors dating patients online in U.S.

The Associated Press Posted: Mar 21, 2012 9:10 AM ET | Last Updated: Mar 21, 2012 10:03 AM ET

New research suggests U.S. doctors are contacting patients on internet dating sites and engaging in other unprofessional online behavior and sometimes getting caught.

That's according to a survey of most state medical boards that license and discipline doctors.

Most boards said they'd received at least one complaint about unprofessional online behavior; 25 per cent had received more than three complaints.

The most common violation was asking patients out online. Others were prescribing medicine and overstating medical credentials online.

More than half said complaints led to serious punishment including revoking medical licenses.

The survey appears in Wednesday's Journal of the American Medical Association.



The most common violation in the study was asking patients out online (iStock)

Related Stories

- Online dating may encourage 'shopping' for mate

External Links

- Physician violations of online professionalism, JAMA

(Note: CBC does not endorse and is not responsible for the content of external links.)

Stay Connected with CBC News

Mobile Facebook Podcasts Twitter Alerts Newsletter

Forest habitat we've protected since you've been here:

20 sq.ft. sq.m

Launch experience YouTube TD

ADVERTISEMENT

Top News Headlines

Drag this icon to your Windows taskbar for quicker access to CBC.

125% 8:07 AM 4/22/2012

2. Immoral acts

- ❑ Physicians should not take advantage of the doctor-patient relationship

Because

- ❑ Some patients are particularly vulnerable

- ❑ Trust in the profession will be undermined

- ❑ The patient's medical care may be compromised

3. Business related acts



These acts are related to the operation of the business, not the quality of the care

- ❑ Obtain, maintain, or renew a license to practice medicine by bribery, fraud or misrepresentation
- ❑ The use of false, misleading, inaccurate or incomplete statements, in an attempt to renew or to obtain a medical license
- ❑ Aiding, assisting, employing or advising, either directly or indirectly, any unlicensed person to engage in the practice of medicine

3. Other Business related acts

- ☐ Receive compensation (in the form of fee, commission, or others)
- ☐ Charge for visits which did not occur, or services not rendered

3. More business related acts

- ☐ False, deceptive or misleading MEDICAL advertising
- ☐ Practicing or attempting to practice medicine under another name

3. Still more business related acts

- ❑ Referring a patient to a health facility, medical laboratory or commercial establishment in which the doctor has a financial interest

- ❑ Attempting to retain or obtain a patient, or discourage a second opinion, through the use of deception. This influence may be direct or indirect.

4. Violation of medical practices

3 categories of conduct



4.2. Negligent practices (may range from minor to severe)

Deals with the way the doctor
performs his duties.

4.2. Negligent practices

Negligence=Medical malpractice



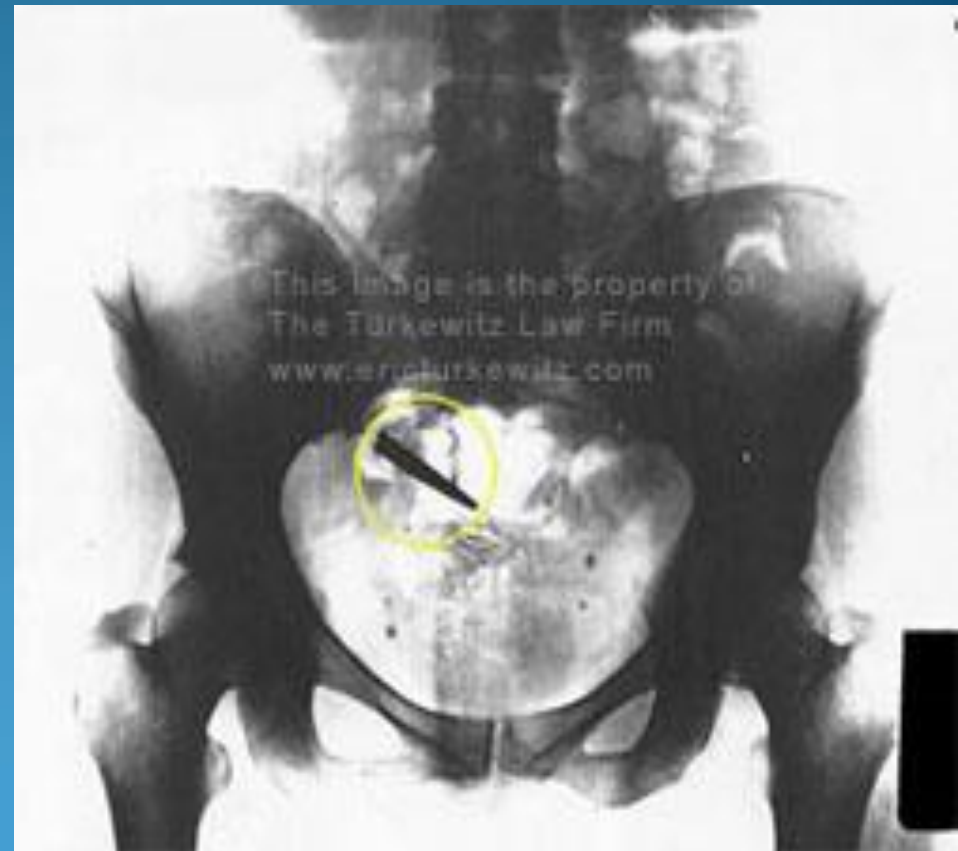
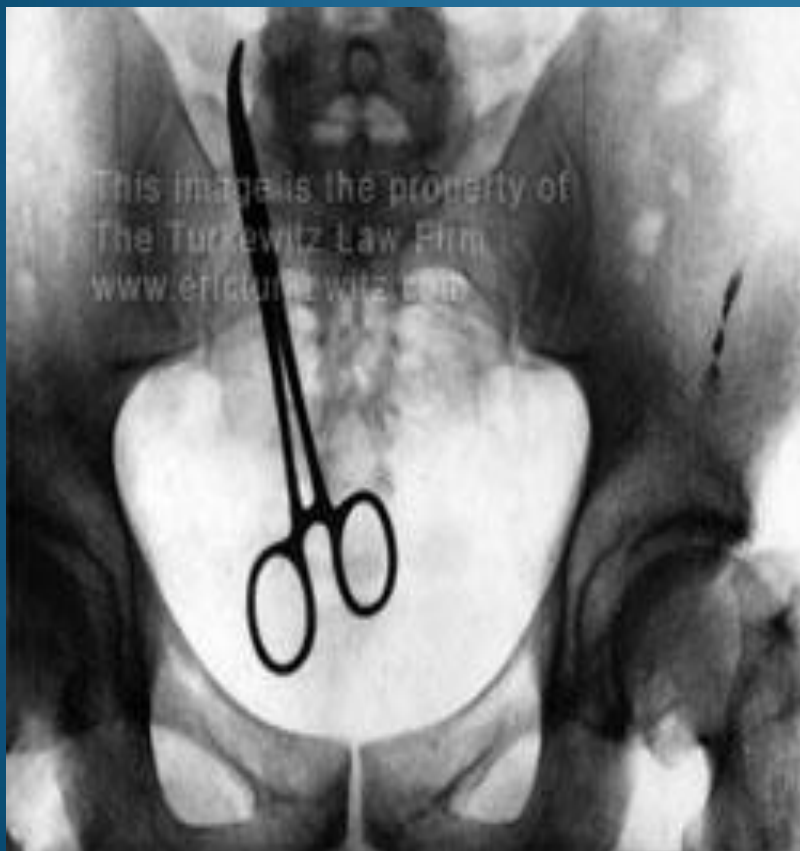
- ❑ Failure to maintain records of a patient, relating to diagnosis, treatment and care
- ❑ Altering medical records
- ❑ Failure to make medical records available for inspection

4.2. Negligent practices

- Is an act by a health care provider in which the treatment provided falls below the accepted standard of practice in the medical community and causes injury or death.
- Standards and regulations for medical malpractice vary by country and jurisdiction within countries.

Negligent practices (example)

Surgical mistakes/errors



Reference: <http://www.turkewitzlaw.com/surgical-mistakes.htm>

4. 3. Administrative errors

Physician's Failure to report about any person who:

- Is in violation of the law
- Is in violation of the code of professional conduct
- Is impaired or disruptive

5. Plagiarism



Is an **unethical, dishonest** act whereby an individual **uses the work of another, commit literacy theft**, or present work as an original idea **without crediting the source** or stating that it is derived from an existing source.



5. Plagiarism

examples:

- Using data for example; statistics, graphs, and drawings without acknowledging sources
- Repeating another person's exact phrase without acknowledgement
- Using another person's sentences or arguments as if they were your own.
- Presenting another person's idea, opinion, or theory in the development of an argument as though it is your own.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lecture You should be able to:

- Define unprofessional behavior
- Identify various elements of human nature that contribute to unprofessionalism
- **Provide examples of unprofessional behaviors**
- Plan strategies to deal with unprofessional behaviors.

Unprofessional physician

- ☐ Impaired
- ☐ Disruptive behavior
- ☐ Dishonest
- ☐ Greedy
- ☐ Abuses power
- ☐ Lacks interpersonal skills
- ☐ Self-serving



Impairment

When physician is unable to exercise prudent medical judgment

and/or

Is unable to practice with **reasonable skills** and **safety** without jeopardy to patient care

Impairment

Impairment means more than making incorrect diagnosis. e.g.

1. Avoidance of patients and their psychological needs
2. Dehumanized care
3. Inappropriate treatment
4. Over involvement in care with sexual exploitation as the most serious form of violation.



Impairment

□ a “disability resulting from psychiatric illness, alcoholism, or drug dependence.”¹(p.107) An impairment can be the result of mental and behavioral problems, including depression, anxiety, substance abuse, personality disorders, and disruptive behavior with colleagues, patients, and subordinates

Annals of Internal Medicine, Lucian L. Leape, M.D., and John A. Fromson, M.D

Disruptive behavior

Include repeated episodes of:

- ☐ Sexual harassment
- ☐ Racial or ethnic slurs
- ☐ Abusive language
- ☐ Persistent tardiness in responding to calls at work

Disruptive physicians are those who ...

“exhibit abusive behavior that interferes with patient care or could reasonably be expected to interfere with the process of delivering quality care.”¹(p.107)

Annals of Internal Medicine, Lucian L. Leape, M.D., and John A. Fromson, M.D

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this lecture You should be able to:

- Define unprofessional behavior
- Identify various elements of human nature that contribute to unprofessionalism
- Provide examples of unprofessional behaviors
- **Plan strategies to deal with unprofessional behaviors.**

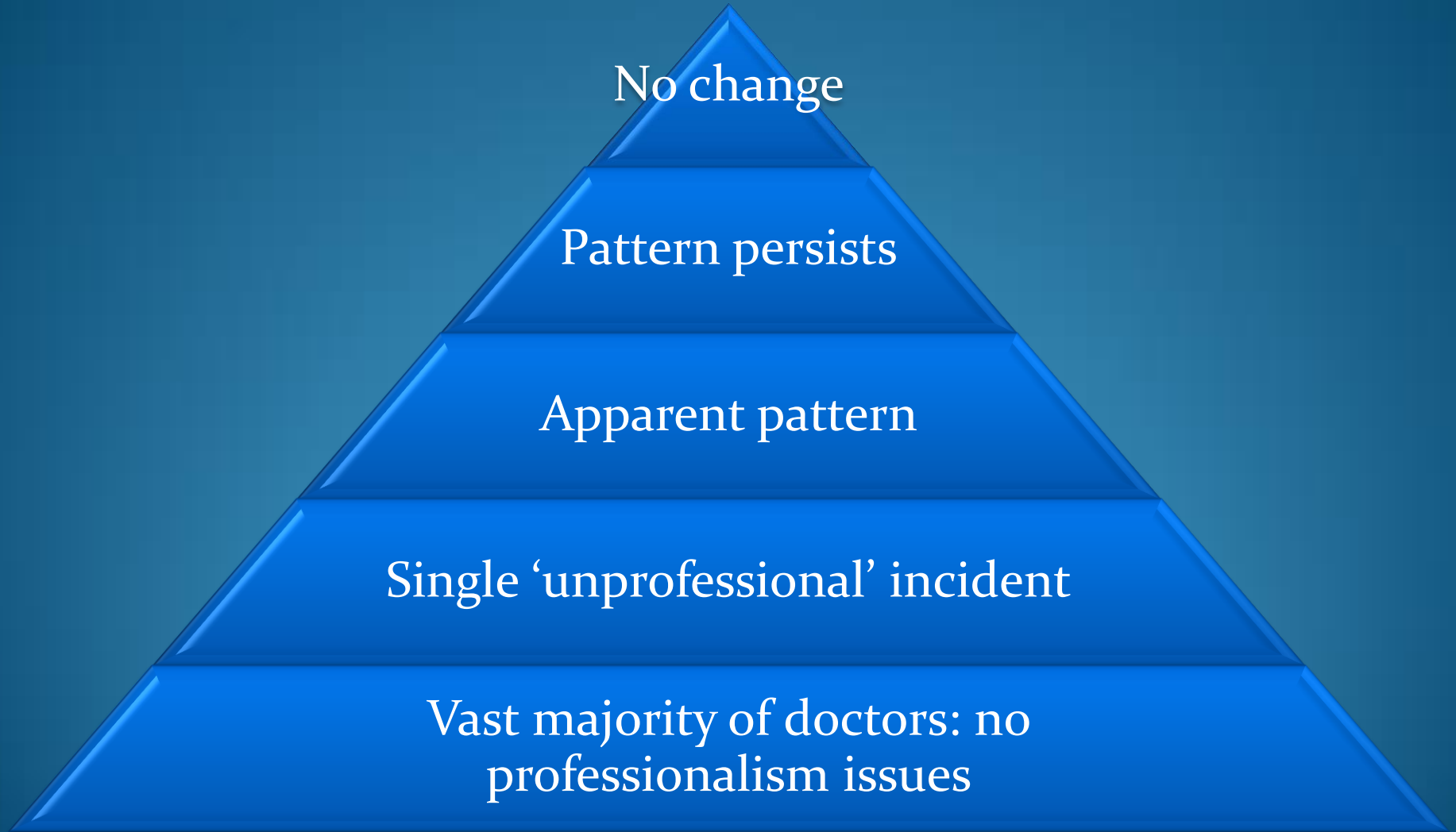
Dealing with unprofessional behavior

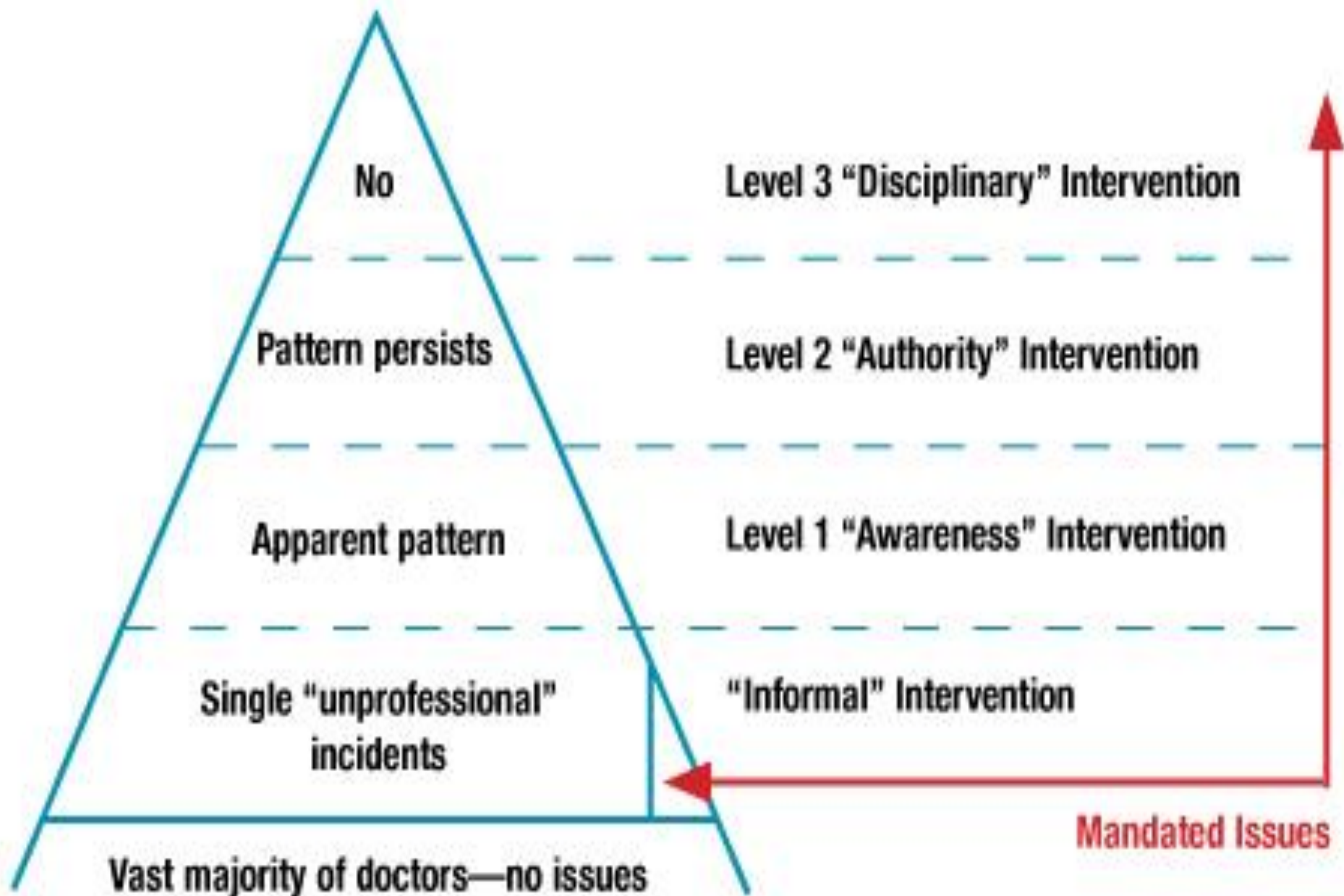
```
graph TD; A[Dealing with unprofessional behavior] --> B[Surveillance]; A --> C[Registration];
```

Surveillance

Registration

Disruptive behavior pyramid





Summary

- ❑ Not pertaining to the characteristic of a profession.
- ❑ Unprofessional behavior fall into five categories:
 - ❑ Illegal or criminal acts
 - ❑ Immoral acts
 - ❑ Business related acts
 - ❑ Acts that violate acceptable medical practices
 - ❑ Plagiarism
- ❑ Do not have to wait until patient dies to determine that medical care suffered.

FOR YOUR READING

Unprofessional Behavior among Medical Students

<http://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMc060089>

Unprofessional physicians

<http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1237990/pdf/westjmed00257-0121.pdf>

Unprofessional or Disruptive Conduct by Physicians

<http://macmedlaw.hubpages.com/hub/Unprofessional-or-Disruptive-Conduct-by-Physicians>

The *Unprofessional Student Objectives* Professionalism

web1.aapa.org/10ACSyllabi/1509UnprofessionalStudent.pdf

THANK YOU VERY MUCH

